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March 19, 1998

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EIU LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO PERPETUATE LIFELONG LEARNING

CHARLESTON -- Last year, more than 9,000 adults from the Coles County and surrounding areas attended programs and off-classes sponsored by Eastern Illinois University's School of Adult and Continuing Education.

Many were working adults who attended EIU classes at off-campus sites close to their homes and finished their bachelor's degrees by earning academic credit for learning gained from life experiences, complemented by selected coursework.

San Diego Zoo Ambassador Joan Embury, 90-year-old Daisy Rittgers of Shelbyville and 77-year-old Robert Tuchel of Champaign are among countless adults of all ages and backgrounds who have benefited from adult and continuing education programs offered through Eastern.

So that more adults can continue to enjoy quality programming as Eastern enters the second century, the School of Adult and Continuing Education has launched an ambitious fund-raising campaign that will help it continue to meet the needs of adult

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students, keep pace with new technology such as distance learning, expand offerings and maintain the institution's standards of excellence, said Will Hine, dean of the School.

"The School of Adult and Continuing Education's campaign comes at a time when education is at a crossroads. As adult learners become the majority instead of the minority of students enrolled in higher education, the demand for more degree programs and class delivery options will increase," Hine said.

"The School alone has grown by one-third since 1991 and shows a steady four-to-five percent growth each year. In the U.S., it's estimated that by the year 2000, 60 percent of those enrolled in higher education will be adult learners. The 18- to 21-year-olds will become the nontraditional students in the future," he added.

Hine said private support will assist several programs: Off-campus credit courses offered at community colleges and school districts in Mattoon, Danville, Decatur, Olney, Salem, Champaign, Springfield, Fairfield, Mt. Vernon and Effingham; non-credit courses such as workshops; and the Board of Trustees Bachelor of Arts degree program for working adults, among others.

A recent survey of students enrolled in the School of Adult and Continuing Education shows a growing demand for more courses, varying class times and more options to learn over the Internet, Hine said. "We are committed to meeting these needs but can't do so with state funds alone. Additional funding from the private sector is the only way we can accomplish some of these goals."

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LEARNING

Hine said the School has established a Lifelong Learning Society to encourage regular contributions from business leaders, participants of continuing studies programs, advocates of lifelong learning and others.

Donors contributing \$100 will be recognized as members of the Dean's Society and will be invited to a campus reception. Those donating \$25 will be at the Member's Level. All members will receive newsletters and other publications from the School of Adult and Continuing Education.

For more information about the EIU School of Adult and Continuing Education's Lifelong Learning Society, call (217) 581-6644 or 1-800-446-8918.